

Message Text

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DRAFTED BY NEA:EGABINGTON:MAR

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S/S: MR. ORTIZ

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 109747

NODIS

FOR AMBASSADORS

FOL REPEAT BEIRUT 4004 (NODIS)ACTION SECSTATE 5 MAY.

QUOTE

C O N F I D E N T I A L BEIRUT 4004

NODIS

FOR THE SECRETARY FROM BROWN

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, PINT, LE

SUBJECT:CONVERSATION WITH JUMBLATT

1. SUMMARY: IN LONG TALK WITH JUMBLATT I TOLD HIM WORLD CANNOT
ACCEPT CONTINUED SHELLING AND ENDLESS FIGHTING. FUTURE OF LEBANON
AT STAKE. ELECTIONS MUST TAKE PLACE. HE HAD TO ASSUME RESPONSIBILITY.
I WOULD SAY SUME TO MARONITES. TIME HAD COME FOR HIM TO TALK TO
MARONITES. HIS DEMANDS FOR IMMEDIATE AND TOTAL WITHDRAWAL OF SYRIANS
AS PRE-CONDITION FOR ELECTIONS WERE NON-STARTERS. FINALLY, I WAS NOT
RPT NOT PART OF SYRIAN-AMERICAN PLOT AIMED AT INSTALLING SARKIS
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DESPITE JUMBLATT'S PUBLIC STATEMENTS TO CONTRARY. END SUMMARY

2. I HAD ANOTHER LENGTHY TALK WITH JUMBLATT AT 6:30 PM MAY 4. ATMOSPHERE WAS VERY CORDIAL DESPITE JUMBLATT'S BLASKT IN THE PRESS THAT SAME DAY ABOUT A SO-CALLED "U.S.-ARAB-ISRAELI" PLOT (WHICH HE SMILINGLY BRUSHED OFF AS A NECESSARY LOCAL POLITICAL PLOY).

3. JUMBLATT STRESSED SYRIAN INTERFERENCE. SYRIA HAD STILL MADE NO GESTURE. EVEN RACHID KARAME, HE HAD BEEN TOLD CONFIDENT ALLY, WAS ANNOYED WITH THE SYRIANS.

4. JUMBLATT CAISED THE QUESTION OF A PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE. THERE WWS THE POSSIBILITY OF A THIRD CANDIDATE BUT HE FAVORED A STRONG CANDIDATE. I NOTED THAT I WOULD LIKE TO SEE A STRONG PRESIDENT WITH WIDEST BACKING POSSIBLE. HE WENT ON TO SAY THAT HE HAD HAD LUNCY THAT DAY WITH RAYMOND EDDE. HIS PARTY WAS FOR EDDE IN PRINCIPLE BUO NO FINAL DECISION HAD BEEN MADE.

5. IN CONNECTION WITH THE ABOVE, JUMBLATT SAID THAT THE CHRISTIANS WERE BY NO MEANS UNITED. CHAMOUN WOULD ACCEPT ANY CANDIDATE PROVIDED HE WAS SUFFICIENTLYHPAID OFF TO DO SO. FATHER KASSIS HAD MADE AN APPROACH FOR A DIALOGUE. JUMBLATT WAS WILLING IF IT WERE KEPT SECRET. PIERRE GEMAYEL'S SON, BACHIR, HAD MADE AN APPROACH. THERE WERE EVEN DIFFERENCES WITHIN GEMAYEL'S PARTY, I.E., BETWEEN BACHIR GEMAYEL AND THE POLITBURO.

6. JUMBLATT ONCE AGAIN RAISED THE POSSIBLITY OF A ROUND TABLE TO START A DIALOGUE, HINTING THIS TIME THAT IT DID NOT NECESSARILY HAVE TO TAKE PLACE OUTSIDE THE COUNTRY.

7. ON THE QUESTION OF SECURITY, JUMBLATT CLAIMED THIS COULD BE PROVIDED WITHOUT BRINGING IN MORE FORCES THAN THOSE ALREADY HERE. WHILE OPPOSING ADDITIONAL FORCES, HE MADE CLEAR WHEN PUSYED THAT HIS DEMAND FOR IMMEDIATE DEPARTURE OF SYRIANS MEANS IN THE FORESEE- ABLE FUTURE AND NOT RPT NOT TOMORROW.

8. HE HAD IN MIND ORGANIZING AN INITIAL FORCE OF ABOUT 2500 MEN IN THE SHOUF. THE HEAD OF THE LEBAMESE ARMY COULD CHOOSE THE COMMANDING OFFICER. A COUNCIL COULD BE SET UP REPRESENTING THE VARIOUS FACTIONS. THERE WAS NO NEED TO WORRY ABOUT ANY DIFFI- CULTIES FROM "THAT LITTLE CORPORAL KHATIB" WHO COULD BE TAKEN CONFIDENTIAL

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CARE OF. THIS FORCE COULD BE USED AS A NUCLEUS TO RESTORE ORDER IN BEIRUT ONCE IT WAS ORGANIZED AND TRAINED. THE DRUZE, HE NOTED, HAD TRADITIONALLY ACTED AS A BRIDGE BEWTEEN CHRISTIANS AND MOSLEMS.

9. ON MY PART I STRESSED THE NEED FOR STOPPING THE FIGHTING AND GETTING ON WITH THE POLITICAL PROCESS. I STATED MY VIEW THAT THERE ARE TWO SORTS OF WAR GOING ON: ONE, AT LINE DIVIDING THE

PARTIES; OTHER CONSISTING OF UNAIED ARTILLERY AND MORTAR FIRE. LATTER HAD TO BE STOPPED IMMEDIATELY. AT STAKE WAS FUTURE VIABILITY OF LEBANON WHICH MUST CONCERN HIM. I PUSHED AHEAD ON THIS. ALSO SAID FIGHTING IN PORT HAD TO STOP AS NEXT STEP. IN DISCUSSING THIS HE DID NOT DENY THAT IT HAS BEEN LEFTISTS WHO HAVE BEEN DOING THE PUSHING IN THE PORT AREA. JUMBLATT FKLLY AGREED BUT, WHEN QUETIONED, SAID HE WAS NOT SURE IF ELECTIONS COULD TAKE PLACE ON SATURDAY AY SCHEDULED. I AGAIN INSISTED ON THE IMPORTANCE OF NO DELAYS, REMINDING HIM THAT I HAD DELIVERED THE SAME MESSAGE TO JOUNIEH WHEN THIS SEEMED NECESSARY.

10. JUMBLATT AGREED WITH ME ON THE NECESSITY OF STOPPING THE FIGHTING AND SAID HE WOULD WORK IN THIS DIRECTION. I AGAIN REMINDED HIM THAT TIME WAS RUNNING OUT AND THE WORLD COULD TURN ITS BACK ON LEBANON. SO FAR, HOWEVER, THE UNITED STATES REMAINED DEEPLY INTERESTED IN LEBANON'S WELFARE AS PRESIDENT FORD HAD PERSON-ALLY ASSURED ME WHEN I WAS IN WASHINGTON.

11. I LEFT THE QUESTION OF A PRESS STAEMENT TO JUMBLATT. IT TURNED OUT THAT ONE OF THE POINTS HE MADE WAS THAT THE U.S. DID NOT FAVOR ANY CANDIDATE BUT HOPED THAT THE NEW PRESIDENT WOULD BE A STRONG MAN WITH STRONG BACKING. HE ALSO CALLED FOR CESSATION OF FIGHTING.

12. THERE IS SOME INDICATION THAT JUMBLATT'S MORE CONSERVATIVE ADVISERS ARE GETTING SOMEWHAT FED UP WITH DELAYS. WE WERE INFORMED THAT DEPUTY PARTY CHIEF KHALAS AND DRUZE ADVISER ABOU-DIAB DECIDED NOT TO ATTEND THE MEETING. MOREOVER, KHALAF HAS DECIDED TO RO TO THE STATES MAY 8 WHETHER ELECTIONS TAKE PLACE OR NOT.
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